

9/14/2009 This Week in Congress

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September 14, 2009

Dear Friend,

Welcome to "This Week in Congress." A proclamation signed by President Dwight Eisenhower on October 30, 1956, declares the week of September 17 through September 23 as Constitution Week. This year's national celebration marks the 222th anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution.

Calling for an Investigation of ACORN

On Friday, I urged the Chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee to investigate the activities of the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN). ACORN is a federally-subsidized organization, funded by taxpayers' dollars. Several videos released to the media this week show ACORN employees fraudulently advising individuals of methods to illegally evade taxes by masking prostitution under an IRS tax code, among other things.

Previously, 11 former ACORN employees were arrested for suspicion of voter registration fraud. I oppose any taxpayer dollars being provided to ACORN and anyone associated with the organization that is convicted of a crime should be

punished. Congress must make certain that taxpayer dollars do not fund inappropriate activities. I applaud the U.S. Census Bureau for recently severing its ties with ACORN. [Click here to read my letter to the Chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee.](#)

2009 Kansas State Fair Begins

The annual Kansas State Fair began on Friday, September 11, and will last through Sunday, September 20. The fair is the largest event in the state and attracts some 350,000 people from all 105 Kansas counties and several other states. The opening weekend at the Kansas State Fair is something I look forward to year to year. Since being elected to Congress, I have attended the fair to gather input and suggestions from Kansans to take back to Washington, D.C. I always gain a fresh perspective on the topics most important to Kansans. During its opening weekend, I spent Friday night at the fair and was glad to visit different booths and meet Kansans from all over the state.

As in years past, I have a booth in the Pride of Kansas Building. Members of my staff will be available at booth #4 to answer questions and provide information. I hope to see you and your family at the fair in Hutchinson.

Kansas Farm Bureau Ag Leadership Breakfast: I began the day Saturday by joining Kansas agricultural leaders at the Kansas Farm Bureau Ag Leadership Breakfast. I was joined by state leaders and farmers and ranchers from across the state. I talked about my opposition to Cap and Trade legislation and other agriculture related issues. I also visited with the group about federal farm policy, as well as trade, rural development, rural health care and the importance of making good decisions today so there is a next generation of farmers and ranchers. Thank you to Kansas Farm Bureau President Steve Baccus for his hospitality.

WIBW Issues Radio Program: I participated in a national issues forum on Saturday. The forum was hosted by Kelly Lenz with WIBW Radio and the Kansas Agriculture Network and was aired live on WIBW Radio. Health care and Cap and

Trade legislation were the primary topics at the forum.

Thank you to Kelly Lenz and Greg Akagi for inviting me to participate.

Via Christi Legislative Lunch: Later on Saturday, I attended a legislative lunch that was hosted by Via Christi Health System. Via Christi Health System was formed on October 1, 1995. Today, it is the largest provider of health care services in Kansas. It was a good opportunity to visit with Via Christi executives about health care issues.

Attending Marianna Kistler Beach Art Museum Board Meeting

On Friday, Robba and I attended the Board of Visitors Annual Meeting for the Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art located on the campus of Kansas State University. Robba and I are honored to represent Ross and Marianna Beach on the board.

The museum was added to the Kansas State University campus in 1996 to feature the university's collection of drawings, paintings and watercolors and has become a cherished cultural center. It continues to provide art appreciation and education to a diverse audience and attracts patrons from all over the nation. Its impact on the state of Kansas is immeasurable.

Thanks to Beth Bird of Anthony, chair of the Board of Visitors, members of the Board of Visitors, Lorne Render, director of the museum, and to the staff of the museum.

Visiting with Business Leaders at Lawrence Chamber of Commerce Breakfast

This week, I attended the Lawrence Area Chamber of Commerce Breakfast. I appreciated the opportunity to visit with business leaders in the Lawrence community and also listen to their concerns about issues on the federal level that would affect businesses at home. I also discussed my opposition to H.R. 3200, the proposed health care legislation. I expressed my concerns about the cost of the plan and how the potential of rolling up to 114 million Americans into one government health care plan could lead to the elimination of private health insurance. Thank you to Hank Booth for his hospitality.

In the Office

Pittsburg State University President Dr. Steven Scott, Steve Robb and Dr. Andrew Myers of Pittsburg were in with Pitt State to discuss the Kansas Polymer Research Center and the Kansas Technology Center. Murat Tatli of Lenexa was in with the Turquoise Council of Americans and Eurasians to tell me about the organization's work to promote cultural understanding. Neil Jednoralski of Salina was in on behalf of the Salina 9.12 Project to talk about the project's goals to restore American values and principles.

Gary Slimmer and Charles Yunker of Topeka were in with the Kansas American Legion to tell me about funding for veterans' health care and efforts at Ft. Riley to assist veterans in filing claims. Before receiving a tour of the United States Capitol, Robin Hertel and Glenda Schaffer of Hays stopped by to discuss nursing workforce development initiatives.

Thomas and Karen Wilder of Great Bend came by to visit about health care reform and also took a tour of the Capitol.

Very truly yours,

Jerry